

## CHAPTER 4

### CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

The project is being developed with input from internal scoping, and with input requested from the public, resource agencies, and tribes.

Internal scoping was conducted by an interdisciplinary team from Theodore Roosevelt National Park, the NPS Midwest Regional Office, and HDR. The team members discussed different alternatives for the Project, environmental resources potentially affected, and past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects that may have cumulative impacts.

As stated in Section 1.4, NPS issued a notice on February 18, 2014, soliciting scoping input from the public on the proposal to construct a new visitor center. The notice and public scoping document were placed on the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=167&projectID=48245&documentID=57636>) on February 18, 2014, to facilitate public review. The comment period for this notice expired on March 6, 2014.

The following six comments were received from the public:

- February 22, 2014—A comment stated that geothermal heating and cooling should be installed for the Project.
- February 24, 2014—A comment stated that a safe area for the new building should be considered before choosing alternatives.
- March 1, 2014—A comment indicated opposition to the three alternative sites and a desire for consideration of two more geologically stable alternative sites: one site directly south of Alternative Site 1, south of Scenic Drive, and one site northwest of Alternative Site 3, across North Unit Maintenance Road and the drainage west of the road.
- March 4, 2014—A comment was received expressing opposition of Alternative Sites 1 and 2 because of drainage concerns, support for Alternative Site 3, and a desire for another alternative site on the flat prairie located between North Unit Maintenance Road and Gray House Road.
- March 5, 2014—A comment noted concern with Alternative Sites 1 and 2 based on soil slumping, and indicated that Alternative Site 3 might have better soil stability. A class I soil survey was recommended for any site chosen for the facility.
- March 6, 2014—A comment questioned the rationale for locations of the three alternative sites based on past problems with the current site, and noted that additional hydrology and geological information should be provided to compare the sites.

In response to the first comment, the NPS is reviewing system infrastructure for the consideration of a geothermal heating and cooling system. The other five comments apply to alternative site selection. Based on the public input, another alternative site was considered and evaluated in this EA. Alternative Site 4, located approximately 700 feet west-northwest of the Abandoned Visitor Center, was identified by the public and selected for further evaluation. Section 2.2.2 describes and discusses Alternative Site 4.

This EA will be available for public review and comment during a 30-day period following publication of the EA.

During the NEPA process for the Project, letters soliciting input from resource agencies and Native American tribes were distributed on February 20, 2014, requesting input by March 18, 2014. The letters included the scoping package provided to the public and were sent to the following agencies and tribes:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- North Dakota Department of Transportation
- North Dakota Game and Fish Department
- State Historical Society of North Dakota
- McKenzie County Tourism Bureau
- Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation
- Standing Rock Sioux Tribe
- Crow Tribe
- Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes
- Chippewa Cree Tribe
- The Blackfeet Nation

On February 27, 2014, the North Dakota Department of Commerce Tourism Division stated their support for construction of a new and expanded visitor center in the area near the existing location to serve as an entry point into the North Unit and as a tourism draw.

The North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurred with the “No Historic Properties Affected” determination via a letter dated March 3, 2014. SHPO looks forward to review of project plans. NPS would provide project plans to SHPO if the Project proceeds through the design phase.

On March 3, 2014, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service responded that the Farmland Protection Policy Act, which addresses conversion of farmland to non-agriculture use when Federal funds are used, was previously applied to this site; therefore, no further action is needed.

On March 6, 2014, USFWS indicated that the project would not have a significant impact on fish and wildlife resources and that no endangered or threatened species are known to occupy the Project area and/or are not likely to be adversely affected. USFWS requested that plans be submitted for review. NPS would provide project plans to USFWS if the Project proceeds through the design phase.

No feedback was received from tribes.

Coordination with the resource agencies and tribes will continue, as needed, prior to and during construction of the Project.

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